



# The Daily Navigator

13th National Veterans Golden Age Games

Special Edition

## Most Inspirational Athlete Award Winner Houston Brumit *Making Friends, Competing Well and Having Fun*

By Kim Byers  
Ann Arbor, Mich., VAMC

He may be small in stature, but he's very long on spirit. He's spry, he's witty and he's always full of energy. His smiles are frequent and his words, friendly. A native Texan — as his name implies — he's Houston Brumit, participant #234, the 1999 George Gangi Most Inspirational Athlete Award winner for the 13<sup>th</sup> National Veterans Golden Age Games.

A 77-year-old WW II Army veteran, Brumit has competed in the Games steadily since 1993, after hearing about the event from a national Games official at his local VA medical center in Bonham. "The first time I went, I thought it was terrific," Brumit says. "I liked the challenge, and I won a gold medal that first year in the pentathlon. But one of the things I really liked was meeting the people and building friendships. It was just an opportunity of a lifetime! It was really exciting — and it gets even more exciting every year, as we meet up with the friends that we've made and endeavor to do better than the previous year."

Brumit is here this week with an 11-member team from Bonham. He and his team members try to watch each other compete and be on hand when medals are presented. But even though he loves the camaraderie at these Games, he also takes the competition quite seriously. He trains during the year, practicing basketball at a nearby college gym and field events at his home in Denison. He rides his bicycle regularly (but also admits that he goes on a "crash course" just before the Games!). A long-time participant in the Texas Senior Games, over the years he's earned a large collection of medals in track, field, swimming, the pentathlon, and other competitions.

Active in sports all of his life, Brumit played football in high school, was a sprinter in track, and also played basketball, softball, and "whatever else I could get into," he says. He credits those activities with helping him maintain excellent physical fitness, and keeping him as healthy as he is today. "My health has always been good. But staying active also gives you a better frame of mind," he says. "Your mind set is much, much better, and it gives you a better attitude and disposition. Then, too, I like to have fun!"

Fun does seem to surround Houston Brumit. Though he calls himself "very competitive," and certainly enjoys winning medals, it's not the most important thing to him. "I try to tell others who may get on the down side if they didn't do that well at their events, 'look, guys, it's for fun, and we're all winners because we're involved and we're *participating!*'"

In support of that philosophy, Brumit says he'd rather try out some of the different activities himself than compete in the same events each time, even if his chances at getting a medal aren't quite as good. "What I like to do is to try everything, and go for the things that challenge me the most — that I have to put the most out for. I don't like the easy events. I like to get out there where the 'rubber meets the road,'" he says.

He has done that all of his life. In the service, Brumit served from 1942-1946, primarily at an Army camp in San Antonio where he performed "whatever service duties were needed the most," including the guarding of German war prisoners near the end of his tour. As a civilian, he held a variety of jobs, including working at an aircraft factory, for the U.S. Postal Service and also for his church, where he remains active in Christian education activities. Not one for

## Brumit (cont.)

early retirement, he is presently involved in health product sales and the ongoing operation of a local cleaning business back home. Married to his wife, Wanda, for more than 56 years, the Brumits have two sons, two daughters, nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, all of whom live nearby and with whom he is very close.

Houston Brumit has many philosophies on life, which he shares both willingly and often. "If it's going to be, it's up to me." And "Never give up, no matter what odds are against you." He also suggests "maintaining a sense of purpose outside yourself. With each 'whatever happens,' have a *larger* objective."

Asked what he would advise potential Golden Agers who have not yet tried the Games, Brumit says, "It can change your whole outlook on life. Watch the others participate, observe them, talk with them, blend in, and be a part of it. Let the Games excite you! Carry on a little foolishness — if the coaches will let you get away with it — *and have fun!*"

## Quotables...

"This is the greatest. It reminds us older people of our younger years in sports. The Golden Age Games are the best morale-building event I've ever attended."

*- Loyal Youngs, Sanger, Calif.*

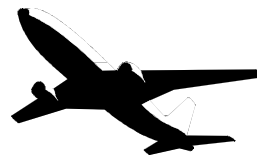
"To me, these Games mean living life to the fullest. As a river flows downhill, so do the years of life. The current may be slowed or deterred by its path. At 66, participating in the Games gives me a renewed lease on this downhill flow. It's another opportunity to appreciate the years I spent in the Navy — to enjoy camaraderie and friendship with others who gave part of their youth to America in peace or wartime."

*- Adrienne Mohamed, Alhambra, Calif.*

"Attending the Golden Age Games is the high point of my year. It's really great to meet old friends, make new ones, and compete in an atmosphere of friendly camaraderie."

*- Arnold Conter, Long Beach, Calif.*

## Important Departure Information



### *For those of you who are flying home tomorrow:*

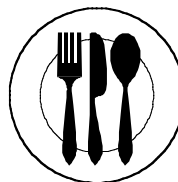
Volunteers will assist you in carrying your baggage from your dorm room to a designated location in each dorm. Federal regulations require that your baggage not leave your sight prior to check-in at the airport. You will board the shuttle bus with your luggage.

Volunteers will staff a desk in Rees Lounge for the Jackson/Rees and Potter dorms, the lounge in Comstock for the Comstock dorm, the lounges of Hale, Bartlett and Durfee for those dorms, and in front of section 15 for O'Dells.

Your key should be returned to the volunteers at the desk. After you return your key(s), the volunteers will assist you in boarding a shuttle bus to take you to the airport for your scheduled flight. You will be at the airport at least an hour before your scheduled departure time.

The transportation schedule for each departing flight is posted on the front doors of the Scandling dining hall and at the entrance to your dorm. Copies also are available in the dining hall and the dorms.

*Have a safe trip!*



## On the Menu...

*Continental Breakfast will be served from 6:00-6:30 a.m.*

**Breakfast (6:30-8:30 a.m.):** Scrambled Eggs; Fried Eggs; Waffles With Syrup; Home Fries; and Sausage Links, plus standard daily breakfast offerings

**No Lunch or Dinner Service tomorrow**